

(We are grateful to John Jones, son of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Jones, Duck Hill Rd., for sending us his copy of *Callboy*, the Mass Bay Railroad Enthusiasts newspaper, July-August issue, which included the following article. Jones is an enthusiastic railroad buff.--Ed.)

On the Railroad to Duxbury

Do you remember when there were trains from Duxbury to Boston? Today, with the price of gasoline soaring and the roads crowded bumper to bumper, trains would be a good solution.

Do you wonder how Railroad Ave. got its name? The Duxbury station was on Railroad Ave. about where the B.F. Goodrich building is now located. Depot St. and South Station St. are so named because the South Duxbury station was at the junction of the 2 streets. A house stands there now and the depot has vanished.

Some village depots still stand forlorn as trains pass them by. Many of them, like Kingston, are boarded up. But it wasn't always this way. Once a pot-bellied stove heated the waiting room. Commuters gathered there in the morning and returned late in the afternoon. Others came to watch the 4:35 from the city rush in. The depot was a meeting place.

And so it was in the cities. Boston once had 7 bustling depots. Now it has only the MERCHANTS LIMITED, the KNICKERBOCKER or the OWL, and if these trains were late, a portion of the fare was returned.

The Old Colony Railroad, chartered in 1844, had a depot on Kneeland St. and its trains went from Boston to Plymouth via the South Shore. But Duxbury viewed this mode of transportation calmly. Duxbury had a satisfactory stagecoach line to Boston in one direction and to Kingston in the other. It had packets and direct ship connections with the ports of the U.S. and the rest of the world. It had ship-building, fisheries and manufacturing and could see no reason that a railroad would be an advantage.

Even when Kingston was included in the route of the railroad from Boston in 1845, Duxbury refused to look upon it as a necessity. Kingston was only 6 miles by stagecoach and those who wanted railroad travel could easily make the connection. However, in 1846, John Hicks, Gershom Weston and William Sampson were among a group who received a charter to build the South Shore Railroad from Braintree

through Cohasset, Scituate and Marshfield to Duxbury. But promoters decided to build the railroad only as far as Cohasset. In 1847, still another group failed to get support.

In 1861 and again in 1866, companies were formed to build a horse-car line from Duxbury to Kingston, but this also failed. However, in 1867, Stephen Gifford, Joseph Cole, Amherst Frazar, Samuel Hall, Bailey Loring and Nathan Whitney formed a group, and Scituate, Marshfield and Duxbury each agreed to subscribe \$75,000 for capital stock. On June 15, 1871, the railroad was opened for service as far as Greenbush. The remainder of the 17-mile road to South Duxbury was opened to traffic on Aug. 17, 1871.

The work had been so rushed that it was none too well done. As a result, the roadbed was not firm through the sections of swampy land. At one point where the roadbed had sagged, passengers were asked to leave the train and to walk along the right of way until the train could pick them up on more solid ground. The line was continued to Kingston and was opened for business on Jan. 22, 1874.

During its brief period of operation as an independent line, the Duxbury and Cohasset Railroad was operated at a loss of \$20,000. In 1878, it was sold to the Old Colony Railroad Company for \$15,000 and was operated as the Old Colony Branch of the New York, New Haven & Hartford Railroad Company.

But about the time of World War II, the shore line was discontinued and the railroad tracks were removed. For a few years, Duxbury residents had to go to Kingston if they went to Boston by train. And now the Kingston station is boarded up and the only means of public transportation to Boston by train. And now the Kingston station is boarded up and the only means of public transportation to Boston is provided by the Plymouth and Brockton buses, which add to the traffic congestion. Oh, for the days of the trains!

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